United Nations ST/IC/2008/11

Secretariat

31 January 2008

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Revalidation of visas**

1. The Secretariat has received from the United States Mission to the United Nations a note verbale dated 3 January 2008 in which it informs the Secretariat of the new procedures for the revalidation of visas (see annex). The main difference from past procedures is the requirement to upload digital photographs that conform to new photo specifications, as indicated in paragraph 4 below.

2. All eligible applicants in the United Nations Secretariat are encouraged to visit the following websites to familiarize themselves with the new procedures, which will become mandatory effective 1 March 2008.

https://ceac.state.gov/agnato

http://evisaforms.state.gov/

http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms_1342.html

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_2637.html

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1280.html

3. The United States Mission strongly recommends that applicants refer to the photo standards guide, available at http://travel.state.gov/visa/guide/guide_3877.html, to acquire a photo suitable for this new application prior to completing data entry. It also lists frequently asked questions regarding this form, which may be useful to review.

4. Please note that although the new application system is designed to function fully online without printing the form, the United States Mission continues to require the Travel and Transportation Section to endorse form PT.61. After completing the online form, applicants must print the confirmation page as well as form PT.61 and submit these documents along with their national passports through their respective Executive/Administrative Office to the Travel and Transportation Section for submission to the United States Mission. No action will be taken by the United States Mission unless it receives the endorsement of the Travel and Transportation Section.

* The present circular will be in effect until further notice.

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Annex

Note verbale dated 3 January 2008 from the United States Mission to the United Nations

The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and has the honour to refer to its circular note HC-102-S-07 announcing new procedures concerning the revalidation of visas.

The United Nations Secretariat is advised that the new online DS-1648 visa application form for A, G and NATO visas will be available, effective 7 January 2008. The United States Mission encourages all eligible applicants at the United Nations Secretariat to use the online version as soon as possible. The new form will be mandatory beginning 1 March 2008. In order to access the new application, please visit any of the following websites:

https://ceac.state.gov/agnato

http://evisaforms.state.gov/

http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms_1342.html

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_2637.html

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1280.html

It is strongly recommended that applicants refer to the photo standards guide, available at http://travel.state.gov/visa/guide/guide_3877.html, to acquire a photo suitable for this new application prior to completing data entry. The frequently asked questions regarding this form (see below) also may be useful to review.

Frequently asked questions regarding online DS-1648 for A, G and NATO visas

Is the new online DS-1648 application going to replace the electronic DS-1648?
Yes, but for several weeks, both options will be available, in order to afford the opportunity to work out any glitches with the new form before it becomes required as of 1 March 2008.

Does the new online DS-1648 application require that all valid A1-2, G1-4 and NATO1-6 visas be renewed now?
No, visas issued using the old form are still valid. Applicants just need to use the new form when it is time for them to renew.

Are all fields in the online DS-1648 mandatory?
Only those marked "Optional" may be left blank. The application will not allow an applicant to submit a form with any mandatory fields left blank; in this instance, an error message will return the applicant to the field requiring data entry.

Do I need to complete the "Tour and Embassy Information" page if I do not work at an Embassy?
Yes. Please enter your sponsoring mission, organization, or U.S. military base information, because this is required for all A, G and NATO visa applicants.

What do I enter for my tour/employment completion date if I used to enter D/S (duration of status) on the old DS-1648?
Choose a date 5-10 years from the day you are applying, as an indication to issue maximum validity allowed under reciprocity agreements with your country of nationality.[a]

Why is the system saying the phone number I entered is invalid?
Check that you followed the example provided below the entry box, using dashes as part of the phone number (e.g., 555-555-5555).

What happens if I need to step away in the middle of data entry?
The DS-1648 will "time out" after approximately 10 minutes, resulting in a complete loss of data if the application has not been used during that time. Therefore, it is advisable to use the "Save" button in the bottom centre of each page to save any data already entered in order to avoid its loss if you need to step away from the application before completing it. You can then use the "Import Application Data" option on the "Getting Started" page to pull up the data you have already entered and saved.

How do I get a digital photo that will successfully upload to this application?
Please refer to the detailed guidance in the photo quality standards guide for specifications to bring to a photo lab, guidance for using a digital camera, and requirements for scanned images.

Why did the edits I made from the review page "edit" link not save?
In order for data changes made from the review page links to save, you must use the buttons at the bottom of each page to navigate, instead of the browser's back/forward buttons or the buttons along the left of the screen.

What do we do regarding the electronic signature if our mission or organization usually prepares applications for staff?
There are two main options — first, you can ask staff to come to your office to electronically sign the application so you can get them to the right place in the application and complete the remainder of the process yourself. Second, you can save the data entered and email the resulting data file, along with the photo, to the applicant with instructions regarding how to import the data, upload the photo, review the data, and then electronically sign; using this second approach, the applicant would complete the final steps of designating the location where the application is to be submitted and printing the confirmation.

What happens if I notice a mistake after I have printed the confirmation page?
Please make a note of the exact error on the confirmation page to draw it to our attention.

What do I need to submit once I have completed my online DS-1648?
If the photo uploads correctly, we only need the DS-1648 confirmation page featuring the embassy or organization seal, current passport (and previous passport, if it contains the previous visa), and most recent I-94. If submitting the application at the United States Mission to the United Nations, applicants also need to submit a

[a] Clarification from the Travel and Transportation Section of the United Nations: For United Nations staff, enter the expiration date of your current appointment. Should you have a permanent appointment, enter your anticipated retirement date as an indication to issue maximum validity allowed under reciprocity agreements with your country of nationality.

diplomatic note. If the applicant is a foreign military member, then he/she needs to submit orders or a letter from the host command. If dependents are applying separate from the principal alien, please submit a copy of the principal alien's visa and I-94. Finally, if uploading the photo failed, then the application package needs to include a standard 2x2 passport photo that meets the non-immigrant visa photo requirements.

If I use the option on the "Thank You" page of creating a family application, can I modify the data automatically populated by the system?

Yes. If one of the dependents has a different surname or nationality, for example, the applicant can alter those data on the application before submitting.